Ariana attends [illegible]'s 13th [illegible] Women in [illegible] event at Pier 36 [illegible]ember 6, 2018, [illegible] York. During [illegible]ceptance [illegible], she touched [illegible] events that had [illegible]ed her over the [illegible]s two years, [illegible]ing directly [illegible]: "If you're [illegible]one out there [illegible]has no idea what [illegible]ext chapter is [illegible]g to bring, you're [illegible]one in that."

Williams. Together they created "Get Well Soon," the final track on *Sweetener*.

"It's all the voices in my head talking to one another," she explains, before softly serenading me. "'They say my system is overloaded,'" she sings, "and then the background vocals say, 'Girl, what's wrong with you? Come back down.'" The studio version is a veritable mille-feuille of vocal arrangement, stacking layers upon layers of Ariana's voice until she lands, wholly, right side up.

On how the event has changed Ariana, Joan says, "She loves a bit more fearlessly than she did before." I gently broach the subject with Ariana, and the name "Manchester" alone triggers a huge teardrop to roll down her cheek. "You hear about these things," she starts slowly. "You see it on the news, you tweet the hashtag. It's happened before, and it'll happen again. It makes you sad, you think about it for a little, and then people move on. But experiencing something like that firsthand, you think of everything differently." She pauses, swallowing the lump in her throat. "Everything is different." Getting back onstage was "terrifying." It still is sometimes. She credits her fans as being her primary source of courage. "It's the most inspiring thing in the world that these kids pack the venue. They're smiling, holding signs saying, 'Hate will never win.'" The tears are full-on now. "Why would I second-guess getting on a fucking stage and being there for them? That city, and their response? That changed my life."

She'd go on to complete the rest of her world tour, capping it off with a performance at a Concert for Charlottesville, another city reeling in the aftermath of senseless violence. A lot of mainstream top 40 types are seemingly reluctant to take a political stance. The fear being, presumably, a loss of fan base and revenue. "That's wild to me," Ariana says. She is loud and proud in her anti-Trumpism and has aligned herself with gun reform and Black Lives Matter. I wonder if she's gotten any backlash. "Of course!" she says. "There's a lot of noise when you say anything about anything. But if I'm not going to say it, what's the fucking point of being here? Not everyone is going to agree with you, but that doesn't mean I'm just going to shut up and sing my songs. I'm also going to be a human being who cares about other human beings; to be an ally and use my privilege to help educate people." For her, the role of the artist is to "not only help people and comfort them, but also push people to think differently, raise questions, and push their boundaries mentally."

I think of a song on *Sweetener* that I had misjudged based on the title alone. I assume "The Light Is Coming" will be a sweet balm of a ballad in response to the darkest of days. Nope. It's a bass-thumping dance track featuring Ariana's friend, collaborator, and "big sis," Nicki Minaj. "The light is coming to give back everything the darkness stole," Ariana trills. But then, what is light without the dark?

By Katie Connor for Elle, *2018*

Ariana 360

THE ENTREPRENEUR

BEYOND HER TRIUMPHS as a musician and actor, Ariana has also had astounding success as a businessperson. In 2015 Ariana launched Ari by Ariana Grande, her first fragrance, and she promoted it by toting around a giant replica of its pink crystal bottle on *Good Morning America* and handing out samples to attendees of the Honeymoon Tour in Toronto. Since then, she's released a slew of fragrances, each in a signature sculptured bottle that's pure Ariana, and has sold more than $1 billion worth of product. Her perfume line has punched well above the typical celebrity fragrance, winning awards and setting a new standard for celebrity offerings.

Not one to be limited to just one direction, in November 2021, Ari launched r.e.m. beauty, a cruelty-free line of eye, lip, and face makeup that, she told *Elle*, she'd road tested personally. Since then, she's expanded the line, adding skincare products, concealers, and foundations named after *Sweetener*, and a line honoring *Wicked*. Its latest batch of new products, the Dreamglow Collection, features r.e.m.'s products in shimmering colors. The company grossed $88.7 million in 2023, according to the marketing agency Upbeat.

In addition to launching her own products, Ariana has collaborated with major brands. In 2019, Starbucks honored Ariana and her oft-used cloud imagery on social media with the Cloud Macchiato. (Ariana, a vegan, suggested that her fans try the soy version.) The Cloud Macchiato's launch reportedly boosted Starbucks' sales that quarter, with then-CEO Kevin Johnson calling the Ari-Starbucks synergy "the second most viral Starbucks campaign ever." Ari has also partnered with the cosmetic company MAC on its lip line Viva Glam (which originally supported the MAC AIDS Fund, a charity that supports people living with HIV and AIDS), American Express (which sponsored her Sweetener Sessions mini-tour), and the crystal company Swarovski (which named her their brand ambassador in 2024).

Ariana strikes a pose in front of a poster for MAC Viva Glam cosmetics in 2016. The proceeds from Viva Glam support a range of LGBTQIA+ charities, as well as health and climate initiatives. The fund has raised over $534 million since its start.

TOP LEFT In November 2024 a Sunset Boulevard billboard advertises Ariana as the new face of Swarovski. The crystal company says of their brand ambassador, "an advocate for inclusivity and empowerment, she is the epitome of joyful extravagance and self-expression."

TOP RIGHT Blending her businesses, Ariana's fragrance God Is a Woman is made available to guests in the gift lounge at iHeartRadio Z100 Jingle Ball 2021 in New York. The fragrance line is known for its signature architectural bottles with both fragrance names and containers often nodding to her songs.

LEFT Ariana unveils her debut fragrance, Ari by Ariana Grande, in New York at Macy's Herald Square on September 16, 2015. While this first scent did not blow away experts, since then the beauty entrepreneur has only improved the quality of the fragrances. With more than fourteen fragrances distinguished by their "playful sweetness," Ariana has built the line into a billion-dollar business.

A Closer Look

THE ADVOCATE & ALLY

Following the terrorist bombing in Manchester, Ariana experienced anxiety attacks during the rest of the Dangerous Woman Tour. The death of her longtime collaborator Mac Miller the next year took an additional toll. Struggling during these years, Ariana turned to music, channeling her emotions to create the 2018 album *Sweetener*. In addition to being open about her own mental health, Ariana also uses her energy and her platform to support others.

TOP RIGHT Ariana credits producer Pharrell Williams with helping her to translate her struggles into music when he produced *Sweetener*. Here, they attend the Grammy Awards on January 26, 2014, in Los Angeles.

RIGHT INSET Mac Miller and Ariana hold hands at an Oscar party on March 4, 2018, in Los Angeles, shortly before their breakup. Miller died by an accidental overdose several months after, and Ariana later acknowledged that his death compounded the mental health challenges she'd wrestled with since the Manchester attack.

FAR RIGHT Ariana has a reflective moment onstage during her Sweetener World Tour stop at Staples Center in Los Angeles on May 7, 2019. The pop star has been candid about the toll that touring and performing takes on her mental health, often writing about the subject on social media. In an April 2019 tweet, she wrote of her music, "Making it is healing. Performing it is like reliving it all over again and it is hell."

“[Ariana] was forced to grow up in public with a tragedy: the terrorist bombing at her 2017 concert in Manchester, England.”

–ROB SHEFFIELD, *ROLLING STONE*, JANUARY 11, 2019

"From the depraved dregs of humanity; the glorious blossoming of hope, a tangible act of togetherness; the salvation of pop. . . . Last night, Grande displayed leadership and charisma that the prime minister could only stiffly dream of."

–HANNAH JANE PARKISON,
THE GUARDIAN, JUNE 5, 2017

Ariana sings during the One Love Manchester benefit concert at Old Trafford Cricket Ground on June 4, 2017. The benefit was held just two weeks after the terrorist attack, and all proceeds went to support victims and their families. The event included stars like Justin Bieber, Robbie Williams, Miley Cyrus, and Katy Perry; Ariana's friends and collaborators like Mac Miller and Imogen Heap; and Manchester royalty including Liam Gallagher of Oasis and David Beckham of Manchester United Football Club.

LEFT Ariana performs to an enthusiastic audience at NYC Pride: Dance on the Pier on June 28, 2015. She started her set with Whitney Houston's "I'm Every Woman" and Madonna's "Vogue" before segueing into "Problem," "Love Me Harder," "Bang Bang," and "Break Free."

LEFT Frankie Grande and Ariana attend Republic Records private post-VMA celebration at Ysabel on August 30, 2015, in West Hollywood. Of his sister, Frankie says, "She was raised in a family where gay was not only accepted, it was celebrated."

Ariana waves a Pride flag while she performs during the 2018 iHeartRadio Wango Tango by AT&T at Banc of California Stadium on June 2, 2018, in Los Angeles.

Reaching Oz

Ariana plays to the light and dark, finding strength and depth from personal experiences for her role of a lifetime.

Wicked plays with themes of light and dark and also shades of gray. While at the surface, Glinda the Good Witch, played to pitch-perfect distinction by Ariana, is all pink bubbles and sunshine, if you look deeper, you'll find something more substantial.

During a panel at the Palm Springs International Film Festival, Ariana talked about the depth she found in her character:

"'No One Mourns the Wicked' is kind of a particularly complicated song. [Glinda] has to put on a strong face and provide hope and be a source of light for these strangers, essentially. She doesn't know them, but she loves them, and they love her. They're looking to her for this hope when she's also needing to find her own strength for herself, so it's kind of difficult."

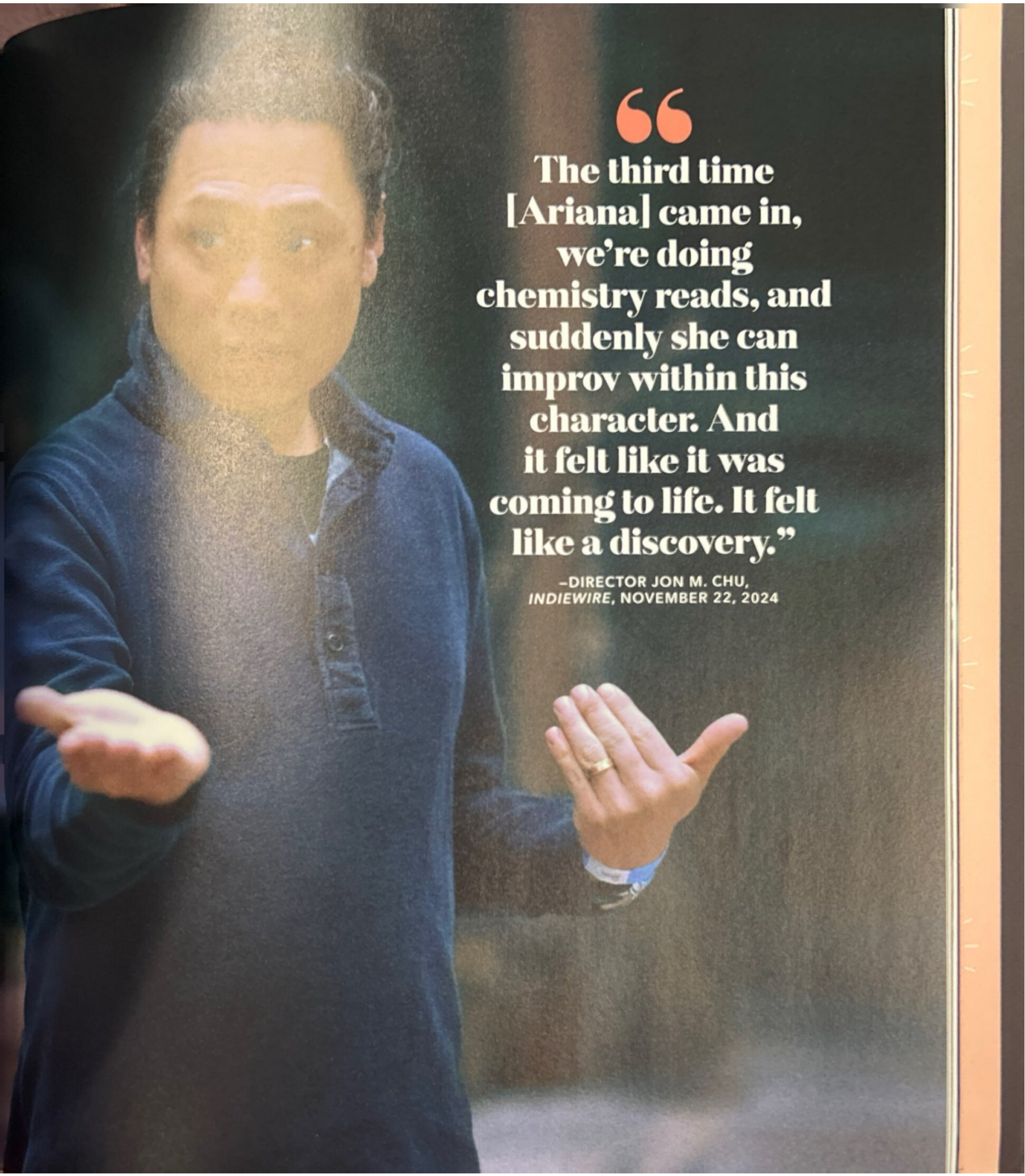
In the same way that Ariana drew hope and inspiration from her relationship with her fans, she saw Glinda doing the same with the people of Oz. "I feel like sometimes in my professional life, I've had to perform through moments that felt tricky in that way," says Ariana, reflecting that her relationship with her fans is like Glinda and the Ozian's relationship too. "That same hope that they look to her for and that same void that they look to Glinda the Good to fill" feels reminiscent of her interaction with fans—that and they "feel it for her too when she's hurting."

Ariana's exceptional vocals made her a star, but her empathy, unwavering ideals, and ability to speak to real people about real issues have elevated her to true cultural phenomenon. Yes, she will give the finger to the patriarchy—female symbol tattooed on her middle finger for added emphasis—but she will also turn the outrage into joy, the pain into humor, and her real-life learnings into lessons for all of us. It's her realness and that indefinable ability to use pain to create joy that make her an icon.

As Ariana put it, again talking about *Wicked*, "It's the unexpected ways, the unexpected turns that my life has taken along the way that prepared me for Glinda way more than just loving pink and high notes and sparkles. It was the other stuff, the not-so-easy stuff, that I think I was able to use most for her because there's a lot underneath the surface."

RIGHT Ariana poses in a dress designed by Balenciaga's Demna for their fall 2023 couture collection. The look "balances elegance and cool," according to *Vogue*.

Co-stars Cynthia Erivo and Ariana and director Jon M. Chu work on the set of *Wicked* in 2024. The stars chose to sing their parts live on set rather than recording them in a studio. "It meant we would be further connected to the words we were saying and to each other," says Erivo. "There's something special about when music is live in a room."



“The third time [Ariana] came in, we’re doing chemistry reads, and suddenly she can improv within this character. And it felt like it was coming to life. It felt like a discovery.”

–DIRECTOR JON M. CHU, *INDIEWIRE*, NOVEMBER 22, 2024

LEFT Ariana arrives for the 2024 Met Gala at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. She conveyed the theme "Sleeping Beauties: Reawakening Fashion" through multiple ensembles and beauty choices, like 3-D fairy wings at her temples, designed by her makeup artist, Michael Anthony.

RIGHT For her first "look" of the evening, Ariana shines in a mother-of-pearl dress by Jonathan Anderson at Loewe that she said both reflected *Wicked* and had a personal connection—pearl is her birthstone. "I loved the tie-in of the opalescence and little hues of pink and green for Glinda's bubble and for *Wicked*," she said. "Pearls are just made in the most unexpected of ways. You never know what beautiful things you will find in unexpected places." Her co-star Cynthia Erivo is equally enchanting in custom Thom Browne.

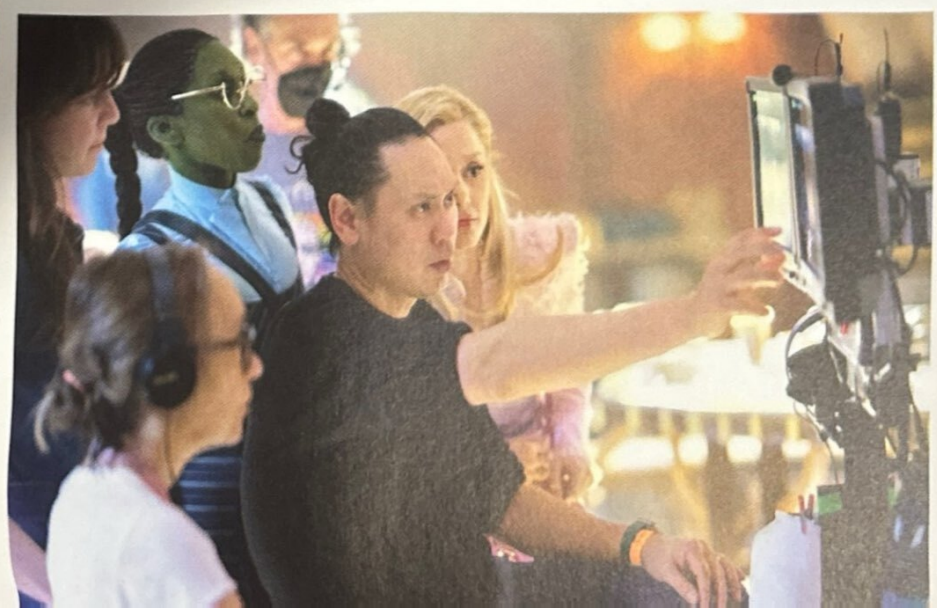
Ariana sings at the 2024 Met Gala in a green tulle ensemble that glitters with rosettes, crystal embroidery, and gold dust. She began her surprise performance with "Once Upon a Dream" and a set of her solo hits before her *Wicked* co-star Cynthia Erivo joined her onstage. The two sang the Mariah Carey-Whitney Houston classic duet, "When You Believe." *Vogue* called their finale a "joyous tribute to unity, hope, and peace."

LEFT A poster for *Wicked* features Ariana as Glinda. The film was released on November 22, 2024, to wide acclaim and rave reviews, for the film itself and for Ariana and her co-stars' performances.

“It’s an incredible privilege to be a part of this version of it and to have it be so accessible to so many people. . . . I think so many new theater kids have been born.”

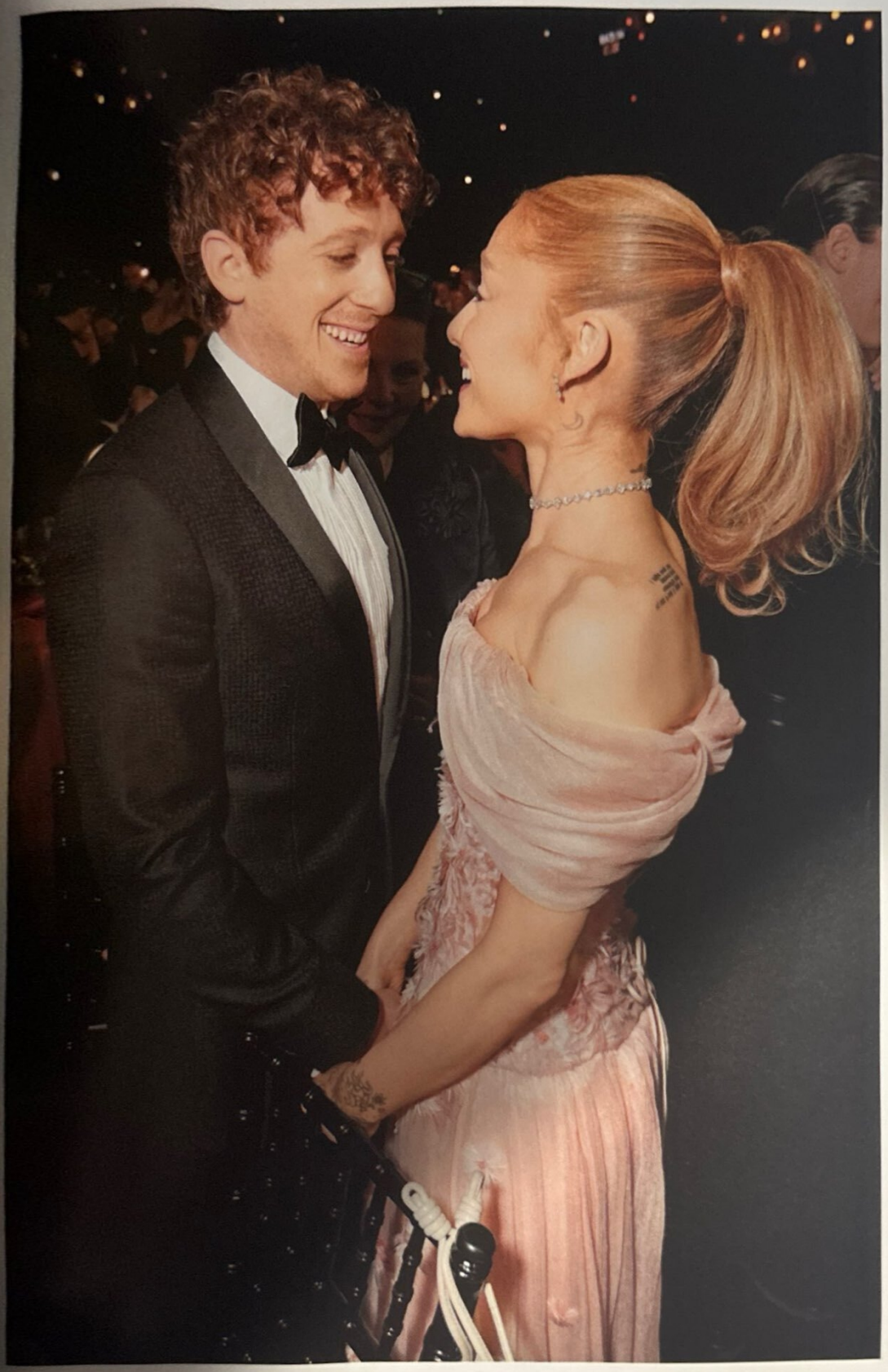
–ARIANA ON *FRESH AIR*, FEBRUARY 4, 2025

LEFT Ariana and Cynthia Erivo gaze into a mirror as Ariana’s character, Galinda, attempts to give Erivo’s character, Elphaba, a tone-deaf makeover. “We provided each other with the space and the kindness and generosity that was necessary to play these kinds of roles,” Erivo said in an interview at the Red Sea Film Fest in December 2024. “To sing with another person is a very intimate thing,” she added.



RIGHT Director Jon M. Chu breaks down a scene with Ariana and Cynthia on the set of *Wicked*. Chu has talked about his original hesitation in casting Ariana for the role before watching her “transform” during her auditions. “I felt like I was meeting Galinda for the first time, not Ariana Grande.”

WICK



LEFT Cynthia Erivo and Ariana attend the Los Angeles premiere of *Wicked* at Dorothy Chandler Pavilion on November 9, 2024. Erivo and Ariana hit the promotional ground running, with appearances across the globe. The two often wore outfits reflecting the colors associated with their characters.

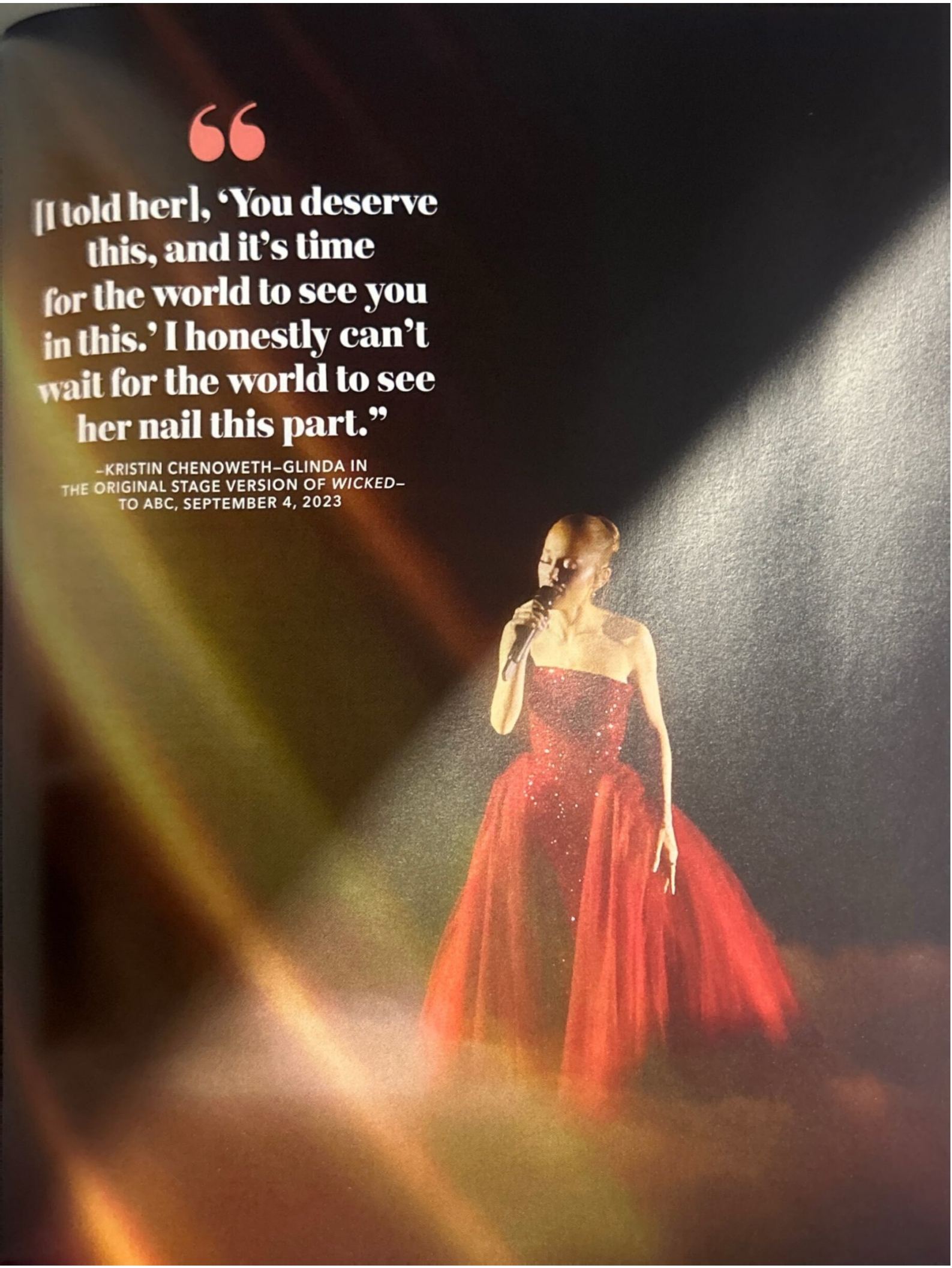
RIGHT Ariana and partner, Ethan Slater, share a moment at the 31st Annual Screen Actors Guild Awards at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles on February 23, 2025. The two met on the set of *Wicked*, in which Slater played Boq Woodsman. Rumors swirled around the two when they were first publicly named a couple.

LEFT Michelle Yeoh, Jon M. Chu, Ariana, Jeff Goldblum, Marc E. Platt, and Cynthia Erivo celebrate the movie's win backstage during the 82nd Golden Globes held in Beverly Hills in January 2025. The film was nominated for four Golden Globes, winning one for Cinematic and Box Office Achievement.

RIGHT Ariana looks serene on the red carpet at the Golden Globes. In a post about her nomination for best performance by a female actor in a supporting role, she said she was "floored," continuing, "I am simply so deeply grateful for this acknowledgment."

ABOVE Ariana prepares to go onstage at the 97th Academy Awards at the Dolby Theater held on March 2, 2025, in Hollywood. In a nod to Judy Garland, the original Dorothy and Ariana's lifelong inspiration, she wears a ruby sequined Schiaparelli dress with a ruby slipper at the back.

RIGHT Ariana achieves new heights at the 97th Oscars, singing "Over the Rainbow" to open the night's festivities.



“[I told her], ‘You deserve this, and it’s time for the world to see you in this.’ I honestly can’t wait for the world to see her nail this part.”

–KRISTIN CHENOWETH–GLINDA IN THE ORIGINAL STAGE VERSION OF *WICKED*– TO ABC, SEPTEMBER 4, 2023

ABOVE In addition to the female gender sign on her middle finger (photographed here as she arrives at the 31st Annual Screen Actors Guild Awards in LA in February 2025), Ariana has over seventy tattoos, almost all with personal meanings. The gender sign was inked on the same night as an "A" on her left thumb. She got both tattoos with her late boyfriend, Mac Miller. As a tribute to the city of Manchester, which is symbolized by the worker bee, she also has a bee tattoo behind her left ear.

RIGHT In a rare *Wicked* appearance with no trace of pink, Ariana wears a little black dress from Emporio Armani at CinemaCon 2025, where the first trailer for *Wicked: For Good* debuted in April.

“Every time she came in, she was the most interesting person. You just couldn’t take your eyes away.”
–JON M. CHU ON ARIANA’S AUDITIONS FOR GLINDA TO *VANITY FAIR*, SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

A Closer Look

RED-CARPET STYLE

After several years out of the public spotlight, Ariana eagerly took on the promotion of *Wicked*, with all the requisite red-carpet events. She went more high fashion than her typical outfits, collaborating with couture houses like Loewe and Louis Vuitton, and adding many subtle and overt nods to her character, Glinda the Good Witch. Pale pinks and greens predominated, with an occasional Dorothy-esque gingham thrown into the mix. High-fashion fans await the second installment of *Wicked* and the red-carpet looks that will surely accompany it.

Ariana makes her first public appearance for *Wicked* in a short Oscar de la Renta dress made up of fabric petals during CinemaCon at Caesars Palace on April 10, 2024, in Las Vegas.

"[Ariana's] always struck that balance of having that girl next door *je ne sais quoi* and also having an iconic, recognizable image."

–AAMINA INAYAT KHAN, STYLECASTER, NOVEMBER 21, 2024

RIGHT Ariana attends the Australian premiere of *Wicked* on November 3, 2024, in Sydney. Vivienne Westwood designed her diaphanous pink gown, a nod to the original Glinda from 1939's *The Wizard of Oz*.

For the Los Angeles premiere of *Wicked*, on November 9, 2024, Ariana opts for a pink gingham, Oz-inspired custom dress designed by Thom Browne.

Ariana attends a special screening of *Wicked* at the Museum of Modern Art on November 14, 2024, in New York, in a hot-pink off-the-shoulder Louis Vuitton dress.

Wrapped in a light-lemon-yellow custom silk dress from the Ralph Lauren Collection, Ariana appears at the European premiere at the Royal Festival Hall on November 18, 2024, in London.

Ariana goes way outside her box of pastels in a loose-fitting black dress from the Row at the SAG-AFTRA Foundation screening of *Wicked* on December 4, 2024, in New York.

Ariana is in vintage Chanel Haute Couture at *Variety*'s Creative Impact Awards on January 4, 2025, in Palm Springs.

Ariana channels the spirit of Glinda in a pale-green satin Louis Vuitton strapless gown with bubble skirt at the Palm Springs International Film Festival in January 2025.

For the 82nd Golden Globes at the Beverly Hilton on January 5, 2025, Ariana opts for an archival pale-yellow empire-waist column gown with a beaded bodice from the 1966 collection by Hubert de Givenchy.

for the National Board of Review Gala on January 7, 2025, in New York, Ariana sports Loewe. The baby-pink satin gown featured darting at the front and a matching shawl for an old-Hollywood vibe.

At the 30th Critics' Choice Awards at Barker Hangar on February 7, 2025, in Santa Monica, California, Ariana stuns in a Dior cage dress. The dress had a fringe hem and was covered in floral appliques.

At the 40th Annual Santa Barbara International Film Festival: Virtuosos on February 9, 2025, Ariana returns to pastels in a Glinda-pink frothy ball gown from Armani Privè's fall/winter 2022 couture collection.

Ariana continues to channel Glinda at the EE BAFTA Film Awards on February 16, 2025, in London in a custom Louis Vuitton gown with plunging neckline and poofy bubblegum-pink skirt.

Ariana attends the 31st Annual Screen Actors Guild Awards at the Shrine Auditorium and Expo Hall on February 23, 2025, in Los Angeles. She dons a custom light-pink gown from Loewe with cascading feather flowers.

For the 97th Annual Academy Awards Nominees Dinner at the Academy Museum of Motion Pictures on February 25, 2025, in Los Angeles, Ariana arrives in archival Yves Saint Laurent from the house's fall 1991 haute couture collection.

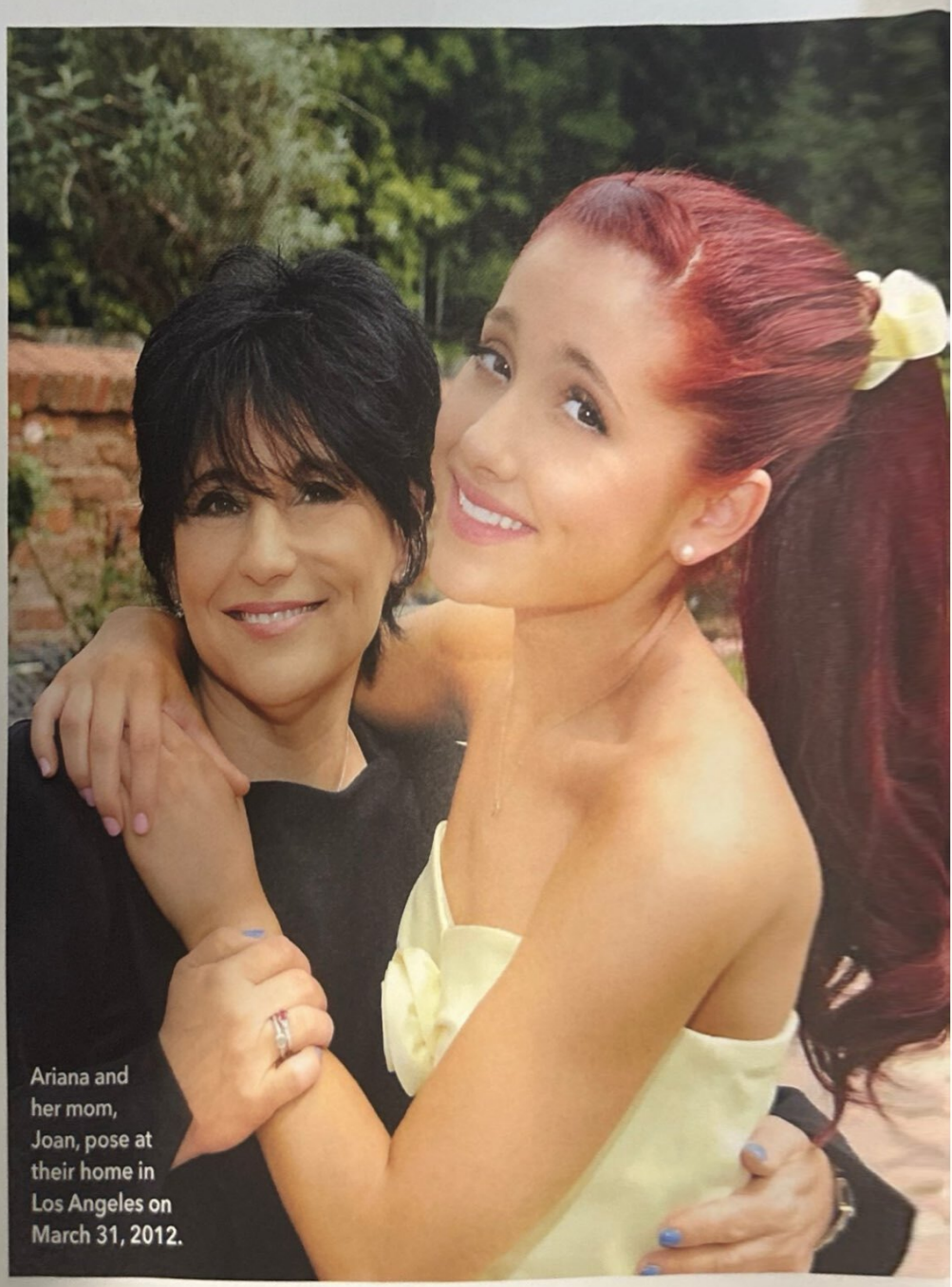
Ariana 360

THE FAMILY GIRL

FROM THE START, Ariana's mom, Joan Grande, has been a guiding light and supporter. A businesswoman, she modeled both grit and loyalty—moving their family to Boca Raton from New York when she was eight months pregnant with Ariana, and then moving across the country to support Ariana's dreams. She instilled in her daughter a love for all things horror and goth, as well as a passion for musicals and R&B.

Joan was with Ariana at the Manchester concert and stayed by her side when they returned to Boca and then traveled back to Manchester for the tribute concert. And she remains by Ariana's side today. In an interview with *ET* outside the 82nd Golden Globe Awards, Ariana said of her mom, "We're together, always."

"She's magnificent in every way," said Joan. "It's inside, outside, in everything she does." To which Ariana tearfully replied, "Thank you, Mom."



Ariana and her mom, Joan, pose at their home in Los Angeles on March 31, 2012.

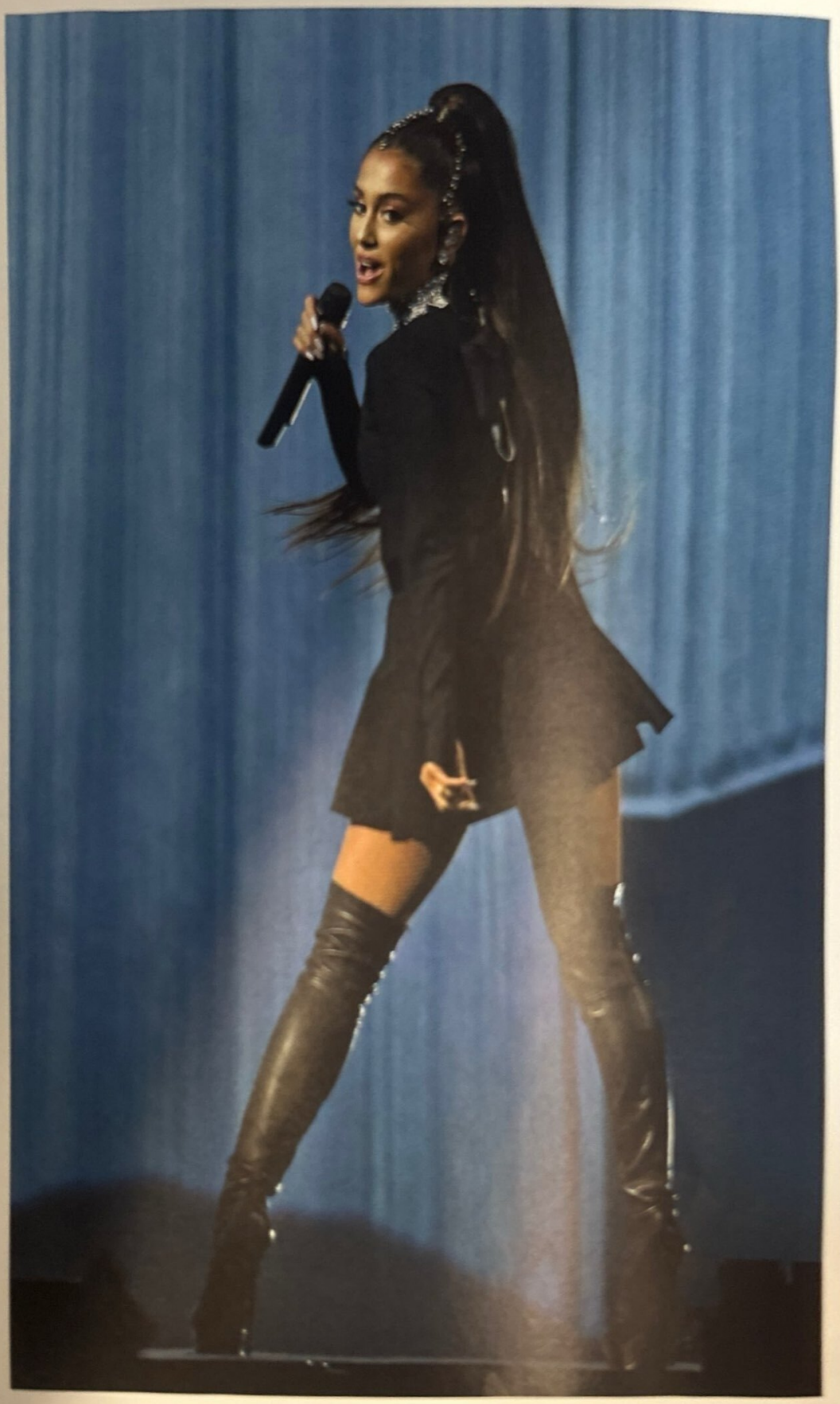
TOP LEFT Ariana and her grandmother, Marjorie, attend the MTV Video Music Awards at the Forum on August 24, 2014, in Inglewood, California. By the time *Wicked* premiered, Marjorie was ninety-eight and traveling less, so Ariana brought *Wicked* to her. They took in the film at the local theater Ariana and her brother, Frankie, had gone to as children. In 2025 Marjorie became the oldest person to chart in *Billboard*'s Top 100 as a result of Ariana sampling her voice in the song "Ordinary Things."

ABOVE During the MTV Video Music Awards at Radio City Music Hall on August 20, 2018, in New York City. Ariana invites important women in her life—her grandmother, her mother, and (not pictured) her cousin Lani—onstage with her.

LEFT Ariana attends the American Music Awards on November 22, 2015, in Los Angeles, accompanied by her brother, her grandmother, and her mother.

LEFT Ariana dances onstage at the first night of her two-night run at Madison Square Garden during the Dangerous Woman Tour. Both shows, on February 23 and 24, 2017, featured support from Little Mix and Victoria Monét.

FAR RIGHT Ariana performs at the iHeartRadio Jingle Ball in 2013. She'd just released *Yours Truly* a few months before and was already a platinum-record recipient and best-selling artist.



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